

*A Covenant God the Believer's never-
failing Friend.*

122
A
S E R M O N

O C C A S I O N E D

BY THE DEATH

OF THE

Rev. EDWARD HITCHIN, B. D.

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE

JANUARY 11, 1774,

In the 48th Year of his Age,

P R E A C H E D I N

WHITE-ROW, SPITAL-FIELDS,

JANUARY 23,

By SAMUEL BREWER, B. D.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

The O R A T I O N

D E L I V E R E D

AT HIS INTERMENT,

IN THE BURIAL-GROUND, AT BUNHILL:

By THOMAS TOWLE, B. D.

L O N D O N:

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TO THE
WIDOW AND FAMILY,
OF THE
~~DECEASED;~~
AND THE
CHURCH AND CONGREGATION,
AMONG WHOM,
HE STATEDLY EXERCISED HIS MINISTRY:
THE FOLLOWING
SERMON and ORATION,
ARE INSCRIBED,
AS A SINCERE, THOUGH INCONSIDERABLE
EXPRESSION OF RESPECT,
By
THEIR AFFECTIONATE
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OBEDIENT
HUMBLE SERVANTS,
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MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I AM confident you will believe me, when I tell you, that I tenderly feel with you, and for you, in that painful, bereaving providence, which has covered your countenances, and filled your hearts with sadness; which has clad your persons, this pulpit, and temple of the Lord, with solemn blackness. — So much do I feel, that if, in this vast and solemn assembly, the Lord does not now wonderfully support and assist me, sure I am, the important service will be an overmatch for me.

Blessed be God! his dear people here, and in many places, have been animated to pray fervently for me: this their christian action, demands my most grateful acknowledgments, and I have an humble confidence, PRAYER will prevail. — My dear friends, add to the favour, by now offering your secret ejaculations to the Lord, that he would command my passions,

B

invigo-

invigorate gifts and graces, and carry me honourably, comfortably, and profitably through the very momentous work before me. Like the devout men of old, we have carried our dear brother to his burial, as they their STEPHEN, where we have made great and just lamentations over him, for truly a good and great man is fallen in this our British Israel.

It was to me exceedingly striking, and affecting, when I recollected that, at the very time we were committing the body of our late dear brother to the silent grave, that very day and hour, one year before, he, with me, and several brethren in the ministry, were together praying, on a very momentous occasion, before a throne of grace—but now, happy exchange for him! he is, I doubt not, before the throne of glory praising.—It is equally remarkable, that my dear brother, on his birth-day, bid farewell to our world, quitted the church militant, and was ushered into the church triumphant.—O, surely then, the day of his death, was far preferable to the day of his birth. Had he lived but one month more, it would have been just twenty-four years since (after my late dear pastor, Dr. GUYSE, had preached a funeral

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sermon to this church in the afternoon) I was called to preach one in the evening, to the lecture in this place, for our dearest brother, the Rev. Mr. MORDECAI ANDREWS.—Recollect that providence for your present encouragement: since as a Philip succeeded a Stephen in his zeal for the Lord, and usefulness to souls, so our late dear brother was sent by the Lord to comfort you then; and I trust, God will shew you by another instrument, that he loves to comfort those who are cast down.

The CHARACTER of our deceased brother, has been largely and honourably given by a reverend and worthy brother, at the grave; for that reason, I decline entering particularly into it:—but would wish, for my soul, and yours, as the Lord shall help, to make an improvement of the affecting, and very afflictive providence. Our departed brother had precious hopes beyond death, and was confident he had rested his soul on Jesus, the rock, which never fails; but he had his peculiar fears respecting a grappling with death.—O how indulgent then was his God to him! in causing him to fall into a deep sleep about two hours before his death, in which he

continued 'till he breathed his soul into the bosom of Jesus.

That, which many years since had been a mutual agreement, I hear he had not concealed from his friends; nor the subject he wished I might take for the funeral meditation. The words, which are exceedingly great and sweet, prove the encouragements he enjoyed under manifold internal and external discouragements; and if we can claim them, then we have a cordial for every temporal and spiritual trial.—About a year since, little could I have apprehended, that now I should have been in life, or my brother dead; but I am yet spared, and he is removed. O happy! thrice happy for me! if what he believed, and has experienced, may be the matter of my faith; my present, my after, and constant experience.—From my soul I pray, that the words of the text may be the experience of all our souls, which you have recorded in ——— ——— ———



PSALM xlviii—14.

*"For this God, is our God for ever and ever ;
 " he will be our guide even unto death."*

WELL might David say, happy is that people whose God is the Lord! He is the blessed man—the the blessed woman—he the blessed minister—in life, and death, who can say all this.—Come, let us put the question round.—Is this God, my God? If so, exult—if not, lament.—It is a claim worth making; a portion worth enjoying; far preferable to any worldly enjoyment, because it yields present satisfaction, is a balance to the sharpest tribulations, and will be enjoyed when we must bid adieu to this world for ever.

It is apprehended, that the psalm before us, was written by David with an eye to some striking distresses, and extraordinary deliverances, to which he and the church of Israel had been witnesses; so the God their supporter under, and deliverer from imminent dangers, has from them a grateful acknowledgment. A good instruction for the Lord's people, collectively, and personally, in all ages!—But what heightened their joy,

joy, was, that what he had been, he ever would be to his people—So shall all his people experience, in all ages.

As then no scripture is of private interpretation, the psalm still stands forth for the encouragement of all the Lord's people, of every name; and ever will, 'till the church militant becomes the church triumphant.—But as the contents will naturally call for our attention, because it unfolds the text, we shall immediately fix our thoughts on it, and briefly enquire into the following things, which David speaks, for himself, and all the Lord's Israel.

I. We shall enquire into the manner in which he here speaks of God; “for this God.”

II. How for himself, and them, he claims him when thus speaking of him? “for this God, is our God for ever and ever.”

III. What is the believing encouragement drawn, from making so precious a claim? “he will be our guide even unto death.”—After having said a little on each of these things, I shall endeavor to make

make some use of the whole, answerable to the present solemn occasion.

I. We shall enquire into the manner in which David here speaks of God? "for this God." Much of the beauty and sweetness of God's word, appears in his promises answering to providences; and in his wearing names and characters, answering particularly to his people's wants, frames, trials, and wishes: Thus here, he speaks of him under a most encouraging name—God. The word in the original, I humbly apprehend, is expressive, of the plurality of persons in the Godhead, and also of covenant transactions for the sinners salvation, *יה אלהים אלהינו*. The name he here wears, is an epitome of the whole bible: the design of which is to proclaim the Father's purposes of love, mercy, and grace, to a chosen people—the Son's accepting the Father's choice, to redeem them by his blood—and the Spirit's undertaking to be the Redeemer's glorifier, and to lead his people through him to the Father; to act for them as a Spirit of grace, to bring them into, and carry them through the church militant; and as a Spirit of glory, to let them see something of glory below, and at last carry them to glory, in the church triumphant above.

This

This is what I conceive the name God imports in the text : hence, under this name we first hear of him in his word, “ In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth ; ” * because the very end of revelation is to unfold this gracious covenant transaction ; to guard sinners from presumption, and desperation. Indeed, “ The fool says in his heart, there is no God. ” † — He sees no need of a covenant God, thinking he is not so great a sinner, but he can be his own Saviour : but the whole psalm holds forth the sinners deplorable condition ; and therefore, no wonder, however careless sinners slight him, that David should say, knowing the value of Jesus, “ O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion ; ” which devout wish was completely gratified, when Simeon had the Saviour in his arms, and said, ‡ “ For mine eyes have seen thy salvation. ”

Precious, indeed, are the benefits flowing from God, as a covenant God ; let Psalm lxxxiv. 11. stand forth as a proof of it, for as such, he is “ a sun and shield ” to his people, and “ will give them grace and glory, no good thing will he withhold from them. ” No wonder then in a psalm

* Genesis i. 1.

† Psalm xiv. 1.

‡ Luke ii. 30.

full of Christ, when we are to hear David's last prayer, he should close all with saying, " Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel."§ Neither can we wonder, at the last words of David, " He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire."|| Precious covenant! precious privilege! precious cordial to a poor sinner feeling his malady, that it provides so all-sufficient a remedy!—No wonder then, that my dear brother was so zealous an advocate for the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity; and for that everlasting covenant in which the sacred Three were so unitedly engaged for our salvation.

- Viewing him as a covenant God, David recites what he was as a covenant God to his people; and of him in this view, we may say as did the Queen of Sheba, of Solomon's glory, " the half has not been told us." Much is said in the Word of God, much in this Psalm, but glory only can unfold the whole.

§ Psalm lxxii. 18. || 2 Samuel xxiii. 5.

C

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C

I. He

1. He is here held forth as "great," v. 1.—"Great is the Lord." so, "for the Lord your God is a great God;"† language equally applicable to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and happy for us it is so, from the great work, each divine person has to perform for the effecting our salvation.—Thus the Father's promises cannot fail of an accomplishment—the Son's undertaking cannot fail of success—or the Spirit's work fail of a completion.

2. He is held forth as "a refuge," v. 3.—so "the eternal God is thy refuge."* In Christ, God the Father is a refuge for us—to Christ we fly for refuge—the Spirit leads us to this refuge—O happy refuge under trials temporal and spiritual, a covenant God! well might Luther, when his friends told him of their trials, and the trials of the church of God, bid them go and read the xlv. Psalm, "God is our refuge, &c." Bless God, my dear friends, that under your present trial you have this God to fly to as your refuge.

3. He is held forth as a God of loving kindness, "thy loving kindness." v. 9.—so "how excellent

† Deut. x. 17.

* Deut. xxxiii. 27.

is thy loving kindness, O God !"§ the typical emblems of it were then in his temple.—His word, his day, his ordinances, his presence, are evidences of it now. The Father's choice of us—the Redeemer's blood shed for us—the Spirit's work in us, blessings in hand, and blessings in hope, are glorious proofs of his loving kindness: they are sweet refreshments under every discouragement in providence, or frame; especially, if we can read loving kindness both when he frowns, and when he smiles.

4. He is held forth as full of righteousness, "thy right hand is full of righteousness." v. 10.—What a refreshing word is that "the Lord our righteousness,"|| in him, we have a justification as to state, and a sanctification as to nature. A sight of what we are by nature and practice, and then an eye by faith of him, full of righteousness, how reviving! especially, when connected with an humble hope of an interest in him. A complete justification—sanctification begun, which will be perfected, when the Believer is presented to himself without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing, holy and without blemish; who, that has a humble

§ Psalm xxxvi. 7. || Jer. xxiii. 6.

hope of all this, but feels a cordial, proportionable to the sharpest trial.

5. He is held forth as a God of judgments, "because of thy judgments." verse 11.—Nay we are called to be glad, and rejoice in them, from the glory God will have in them, and the good his people will gain by them. Indeed, now they are often a great deep—yet in the midst of them, great is his faithfulness. So David thought, "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me."||—God help us all to say so now!—then we shall write over the present dispensation, "it is well." What of it we know not now, we shall know hereafter, when weeping and groaning will be turned into singing and shouting; for how else shall we be able to sing the Song of Moses, and the Lamb, but as seeing the way in which we are led, was "the right way to the city of habitation."

As eying all this, the Psalmist stands forth for himself, and the church, admiring and adoring—"for this God." The like language we have after a review of some of the Lord's great and

precious promises,* “this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord,”—surely then, this was worth telling to the generations following, that the God we claim, is a COVENANT GOD; as such, great, a refuge, a God of loving kindness, full of righteousness, and one even whose judgments call for rejoicing and gladness—let us rehearse then, again and again, what this God is, for the encouragement of our own souls, as our brother did for the encouragement of his soul; rehearse it to your fellow-believers, to encourage them; rehearse it to poor sinners, to allure them to him—and to poor backsliders to invite them to return to their God—Now, I would set this God before you, as a sweet encouragement under your present sore discouragement; especially considering what we have

II. To enquire into, and that is, how for himself, and them, David claims him, —“for this God is our God for ever and ever.”

It is an aggravation of the torments in hell, that they are ETERNAL—it would be an abatement to the felicities in heaven, were they also not eternal—

* Isaiah liv. 17.

eternal—equally so, “relation to God” would lessen in its value, could there be a suspicion of the loss of relation to him, and affection from him, but the text stands as an answer to every unbelieving objection.

1. Here is a sweet personal claim—this God is “our God.” Say that, and then you may say, “God is my father, by him in Christ I am adopted, accepted, forgiven—Jesus is my Saviour, with his righteousness he has clothed my guilty soul, with his blood he has cleansed my polluted soul, and out of his fulness he is supplying my indigent soul. The Spirit is become my in-dweller, he is discharging his precious office for me, as a renewer, convincer, sanctifier, sealer, witnesser, leader—and will be to me, a Spirit of grace, and of glory.” Thus, the language corresponds with that of the church, after a review of the redeemer’s glory—“this is my beloved, and this is my friend.” § O my dear hearers, thus claim, and then sadness will turn into gladness; then sin, Satan, the world, may do their worst, all is well; O then! no tribulation can equal such a consolation—especially as

2. Here

2. Here is an extensive claim—for this God is our God, “for ever and ever.”

What a scriptural argument is this, for that very precious doctrine of the saints perseverance? and none interested in the privilege, can abuse it to licentiousness, but must find it a special motive to gospel holiness.—It is also a sweet cordial, when God withdraws the light of his countenance; when we are tortured by inward corruptions, and Satan’s temptations; also in seasons of sad languishings in our graces; — “our God for ever and ever,” read it over and over again, believer, and exult in your privilege—everlasting love thy father had for thee — “I have loved thee with an everlasting love.”*—Before the foundation of the world, in Christ he chose thee — In time, thy loving Jesus left his glory, to die for thee, and went back to glory to plead for thee.—The Spirit to prove the prevalency of his intercession, came and called thee, and having called thee, he never will leave thee ’till he sees thee safe in glory: was it not so, how would that gracious declaration be fulfilled? “Whom^v he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justi-

* Jer. xxxi. 3.

fied;

fied; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."†—Here our brother got a staff to lean on, when he was weary; bread to eat, when hungry; and water to drink, when thirsty: and what all this was to him in the wilderness, is the same to us, if we are the true Israel of God. Yea, more than all this—as will appear if

III. We consider what was the believing encouragement, drawn from making so precious a claim?—"he will be our guide even unto death." The encouragement is not founded on what we are to him, but what he is to us; nor from what we have done for him, but what he will do for us.—If this was not the foundation of our hope, we should after all despair; and yet the consideration of his covenant faithfulness, is a sweet incitement to holy obedience; awakens lamentations that we love him no more, and serve him no better; and makes his people to long for the fulfilment of what is now before us, when as they shall enjoy him, so they will love and serve him perfectly.

What then as "our God for ever and ever" is the encouragement drawn from it?

† Rom. viii. 30.

i. The encouragement is, that he will be "OUR GUIDE"—how sweetly is this held forth through the whole 121st psalm: a psalm full of encouragement to the spiritual as well as the natural traveller and mariner, looking for a spiritual home, a spiritual port.—Short, but vastly expressive, is that promise, "And the Lord shall guide thee continually"*—spiritual babes, children, young men, and fathers, ever have found, and ever shall experience that good word.—And to-day, each may and ought to erect their EBENEZER with wonder, gratitude, and encouragement.—So, all is safe and well, and the believer becomes an overmatch for inward corruptions, the world's allurements, the devil's temptations, the hardest services, and the sharpest sufferings.—But

2. The encouragement is, that he will be our guide even "unto death."

Blessed be God! his faithful and refreshing word will be fulfilled, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."†—Three important things appear to be included in this short and precious sentence, as

* Isaiah lviil. 2.

† Heb. xiii. 5.

1. That he will be our guide even "unto death." — As he led Israel from Egypt through the red sea; led them into, and through the wilderness, to the banks of Jordan, to look over the river into the promised land; so, he brings his people out of their spiritual Egypt, carries them through their red-sea dangers, guides them with his pillar of cloud by day, and his pillar of fire by night, through the spiritual wilderness; gives them spiritual bread and water, that they may be refreshed and strengthened for their spiritual journey; helps them by faith to look for healing to Jesus; daily carries them on to their spiritual Jordan, and at times, gives them a spiritual sight of the glory, and spiritual tastes of the fruits, of the promised land, before they go into it; and as he guides to, and will guide through death, they are often helped to say, "though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me."† —

2. He will be our guide OVER OR ABOVE DEATH.*
Hence the holy triumph of the Apostle, "O

† Psalm xxiii. 4. * *by* super, juxta, supra, contra, &c.
death,

death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? — But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* My dear hearers, it is one thing to talk of death, and another to die; but if the Lord be with us, then may we say as good Dr. Grosvenor did, “ If God smiles on me, I will smile on death.” But should we not have consolations in death, if the Lord is our God, we shall have protection in, and victory over death, let it come suddenly, or gradually. If the Lord is ours, death is ours, a friend and not an enemy; a friend to dismiss us from a world of sorrow, and to waft us into a world of everlasting joy. For

3. He will be our guide BEYOND DEATH, Where? not into never-ending misery, but never-ending felicity. The believers with the Lord will gratify, “ thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.”† The question is vastly momentous, What will become of my soul when it takes wing from the body? They who by grace claim God as their covenant God, can answer. It is kind in friends to give the

* 1 Cor. xv. 55, 57.

† Psalm lxxiii. 24.

breathless body a decent, honourable funeral; and you, my friends, have generously testified this, respecting your late dear pastor: but our God is kinder still, for while the body lies mouldering in the silent tomb, the soul is triumphing in his presence in glory---appears there, got out of great tribulation, with its robes washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb---there it lives, loves, and enjoys God, exults in him, and waits for its once dear partner the body: at the trump of God, they meet, unite, and part no more. Though it will be a day of fresh lamentation to the wicked, for body and soul to unite to be sent into everlasting misery, yet O how transporting a day to the righteous! for soul and body to unite and live in that presence, "where is fulness of joy," and at that right hand "where there are pleasures for evermore."

A P P L I C A T I O N.

I. You see, what a comfortable passage of Scripture this was for your late dear pastor, to live upon. I call him your DEAR PASTOR; he was dear to his family, to his friends, and to you his flock: rejoice, that these words, his own choice for a funeral sermon, were not taken up merely as expecting death, or when death had laid its cold hand on him; No---they had

had been words for his encouragement in life, in health, and whenever death should knock at his door. --It is true, he drank not in all the consolations of the text in his sickness, or when on his dying bed; yet the repeated sweet sentences which dropped from his lips, proved that he had supports from them---he had his sips, his glimpses, but now, O now ! he has his full draughts, and his full blaze, in glory.

2. What a cordial is this to me---to his brethren in the ministry---to you that loved him, occasionally now here---to you his dear flock---above all, to his dear family.

I know I loved him, and therefore I feel deeply the loss of him ; some humble hope have, I that I have also some interest in the blessing held forth in the text, which makes it a cordial under this trial ; as I hope tho' parted now to meet with him in glory to part no more. He was loved by many of the Lord's Ministers of different names ; because he ever professed a love to all that he believed loved Jesus ; and therefore the Lord's ministers now weep for him. But blessed be God ! as he has done weeping, so will they, when arrived at that glory to which he is got ; 'till then, let all

all the dear ministers of God, prove their sense of this affliction, by walking more together in christian affection, and cherishing a warmer ambition to honour the God of our salvation by zeal for his gospel, and glory; and to be instruments in his hand to bring in sinners to Jesus, to recover backsliders, to comfort believers, get more communion with God, and conformity to him, 'till brought to everlasting vision of, and fruition with him.

Many friends both absent and present, not immediately connected with this congregation, feel the loss for themselves, for Christ's interest in general, and for this interest in particular.---Some are now, perhaps, dropping a tear at home---others in one and another of the Lord's temples---some now without, and many here within---well, you shew by your affections, it is to you an affliction, and indeed the trial may soon come to your own temples, your families, your selves. God help you to see whether God is your God! Then, here is a cordial; for though separated soon, you will meet in glory to part no more for ever.—But the trial sharpens, as looking on you, his once dear congregation

gregation and church.---To you of the congregation he has been a BOANERGES, a BARNABAS : O ! has he preached, and you heard in vain ? Think, O soul ! how awful to have him to stand forth as a swift witness against you at Christ's judgment seat ! would to God his death may be your life ! by some providence, or ordinance, may you at last feel your malady as sinners, and see and claim the remedy in Jesus ; that you may meet your dear minister with joy, and not with grief.

But you of the congregation who can claim God as your salvation, you have the best of comforts under your present cross : how shall I speak to you as a church ? I know that the tears trickling from your eyes, are occasioned by the deep sorrow in your hearts ; but if God be your God, then he can, and will make up in himself the loss of your dear pastor.---Come you my brethren in office in this church, encourage yourselves in the Lord your God,---be not discouraged, because your pastor was taken away in the midst of his usefulness, so was your other dear pastor, Mr. Andrews ; and is it not a high privilege, rather than to outlive our usefulness?---the Lord help you to bless God for the use he made of him to others---and to your
own

own souls; now honour your character, and shew your love to your late pastor, by doing your best for the peace, unity, and prosperity of the church, and may you live to see it provided with another pastor after God's own heart! --- Brethren and sisters of the church, rejoice! though your pastors die, your God lives for ever; bless him, if under the present trial that touches you so tenderly, you can say, "this God is our God," then, 'till you die, and when you die, your God will take care of you, and at last bring you to see your dear pastor in glory: who, has already met many of his members that went before him; who sees his dear parents there---his dear brother ANDREWS, whom he succeeded---and among other glorified saints, those dear men of God, an OWEN, a GUYSE, a GILL, and a WHITEFIELD, where, I am sure, hearts and hands are united. Would to God! it may be a lesson to us yet in the church militant, who hope to meet such men of God in the church triumphant; but the sweetest meeting of all will be, with that gracious God who brought us there.

Well my dear friends, prove your love, by living in love, keep close together, look up
to

to the Lord by prayer, to support you under, and profit you by the trial, and in his own time, to provide for you; and at last, as he has in part, completely fulfil this good word to you, that you may go and live with him you loved, never to part more.

And now when going to address you his late dear FAMILY,--I feel a secret pleasure that his late dear wife, and my dear sister, is absent; or I fear what I have said, or might say, would be more than her tender passions could bear. However, I hope the Lord that has sent, will yet send his sweet cordials, and especially this in the text, then she will say, though tribulation, yet consolation also abounds. — I am sure, personally I cannot neglect any thing to testify my love to her; I fervently pray for her and her's; and I am confident, you as a church, will do the same, as the one best proof that at heart you loved your late dear pastor. But how shall I, how can I address you his late dear CHILDREN! I know, and you know still more, how much he loved you; and I know you loved him. I feel the more for you, from an apprehension what my dear family will feel, when it is with me, as now with your dear father. Blessed be God!

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some of you have avouched, and publicly too, the God of your father to be your God. O how did he joy in it? how ought you now to joy in it, to find such a support under your loss! — But are any of you strangers to the Lord? God forbid you should remain so! Should this be the case, O how awful to think, that a father who loved you, — whom you loved, and for whom you now weep, will stand forth as a swift witness against you and say “AMEN” to the awful sentence “Depart ye cursed,” — but on the contrary, O that you may lay hold of the God of your father and mother, for your God; that at the great day, you with them may receive the joyful benediction “Come ye blessed.” Finally, as a lover of your dear parent now living, and of him who is dead, let me beseech you to maintain love and duty to your dear mother; live in love with one another; and may God bless you all temporally, spiritually, and eternally!

In a word, may this be a teaching season to backsliders; particularly to you (if any such) under the late care of my dear brother, O that if the word has not, may the rod reclaim you! may the Lord say, “return ye backsliding children, I will heal your backslidings,” and may you

you say "we return unto thee for thou art the Lord our God!"

May the Lord make it also a quickening providence to us all! to be ready at the Lord's call—to be up and doing while it is day, as the night cometh when no man can work.

I wish in God, that my soul, and the souls of all my dear brethren in the Ministry, may be quickened by it, so as to spend and be spent for Christ and souls; to go on, valiantly fighting the good fight, keeping the faith, till our course is finished, and we receive the crown. Particularly, may it be a humbling, teaching, quickening lesson to you his late dear charge, and may you learn from it to live less on creatures, and more on Jesus, who is "the same yesterday, to day, and for ever."

Come then; a little longer, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.—Soon, I trust, we shall have to say, as that good man Mr. BAXTER did, when in agonizing pain on his death bed; on a friend's asking him how he did, he replied, "almost well," and soon he found it so, on getting to his everlasting rest. So, my dear hearers, a few more disappointments, a few more bereavings, a few more

trials temporal and spiritual, and then “ if this God be our God,” we shall find he will be so “ for ever and ever”---he will sweetly prove it, by being “ our guide unto---over---and beyond death”---and what then ? O then, no wanderings from God, no withdrawments of his blessed presence, no weariness in our master’s service, no coolness of love between brethren, no languor in our devotions : O then, faith will be swallowed up in vision, hope in fruition, grace in glory ; — then we shall be all we can wish or want to be, for place, for company, for enjoyment, for employment — and that not for a day, a month, a year, but for eternity ! When we shall shout praises indeed to FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT, the God of our salvation.”

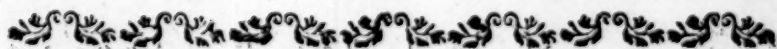




THE
ORATION
AT

The INTERMENT, &c.

By THOMAS TOWLE, B.D.





THE ORATION

AT

The INTERMENT, &c.

EVERY grave at which we stand, presents to our view a scene truly affecting,—but in the grave now open before us, we behold an OBJECT suited to make a peculiarly deep and lasting impression: we have just been witnesses to the interment of a worthy man, an exemplary christian, an uncommonly acceptable, and, as far as our limited views will permit us to judge, eminently useful MINISTER.

I presume, I should not be excused by any who now hear me, nor indeed should I be able to excuse myself, was I, on this solemn occasion, only
to

to make this general transient mention of my deceased friend, and brother: I shall therefore, before the instructive particulars; which this mournful providence has a tendency to inculcate, are laid before you, just suggest a thought or two concerning him, whose death has brought us to this place.

He was descended from parents truly respectable, as they not only expressed a regard for the gospel of Christ, but, all their days maintained a character uniformly consistent with that profession. This being his honour and happiness, he was favoured with that inestimable privilege, a pious education, which it pleased him, from whom "cometh every good and every perfect gift," so to bless, as that he was not only strictly moral, but also really religious, in the early part of life. Soon giving evidence, that, he was a possessor of that invaluable treasure, true religion; and that he had promising abilities for "serving God in the gospel of his Son;" he was, when young, designed for that honourable and difficult employment, the Christian Ministry. In pursuance of this design, he entered on, and persevered in, a course of studies, under the direction of able tutors, which he finished with such credit, that he

came

came into the sacred work, to which he had been devoted, with very pleasing appearances of his being intended by God, for great service, both in the church, and in the world. He was soon taken notice of, as a minister of the gospel; and not long after his appearing in public, he settled in this great city, as an assistant to that eminently judicious, experimental, and practical divine, the late Rev. Mr. Richard Rawlin: in which situation, his preaching and behaviour engaged the very great regard of that amiable man to him, and gave him an high place in the esteem of those who attended his ministry. But acceptable and useful as he was in that station, providence had designed him for another, a larger sphere of action; accordingly on the demise of their greatly and justly beloved Pastor, the late Rev. Mr. Mordecai Andrews, he was unanimously chosen to undertake the charge of that church of Christ, in which he honourably presided, and among whom he faithfully and zealously laboured, to the day of his death.

Having thus laid before you a brief sketch of my dear and Reverend Brother's valuable life---I might here enter into a large and minute representation of his truly worthy and excellent character:

rafter: to this the high regard I had for him, strongly excites me ; but the severity of the season, and the place in which we stand, compel me to forbear ; I shall only, therefore, just mention a few particulars, which I know to be true, and which appear to me peculiarly deserving esteem and imitation ;—mention them not so much to commend him, as to honour that rich “ grace, by which he was what he was.”

His disposition was peculiarly amiable, friendly, and benevolent : his countenance might, indeed, lead some to suspect, that he was of an unsociable, austere, forbidding temper; but if any entertained such a suspicion, they were strangers to him. Those who knew him most, knew, that the law of kindness influenced his heart, dwelt on his lips, and governed his life ; that he was averse to return evil, disposed to do good, and even delighted to “ overcome evil with good.”—He had not merely a sincere, but a high and strong veneration for the word of God. He indeed greatly valued that noble compendium of doctrines and duties, The Assembly’s Catechism ; but then he valued that, and every other human composition, no farther than, as he apprehended, they expressed the

the mind of God, revealed in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, that blessed book which should ever be regarded as the sole, because the only infallible standard of faith and practice.

It may not be improper, before I leave this part of his character, just to observe, that he thought some parts of the divine revelation too much neglected, even by many whom he considered as having a real and great regard for the inspired writings ; I mean some parts of the Old Testament : accordingly, he often employed his thoughts on them, and on them he often insisted in the course of his public ministry.---And if, in some instances, it is thought by many, he went farther in explaining the typical reference of persons and things, under the Mosaic œconomy, to the promised Messiah, than many Divines equally evangelical with himself, approve ; may not the noble principles by which, I am certain he was influenced in this part of his conduct, place him, I do not say above censure, but even in a pleasing light, to those who love the whole of the bible, and rejoice to think that the important doctrine of salvation, by Christ, spreads itself through almost every page of that divinely inspired volume?---

While he was candid and charitable to those whose religious principles and practices were different from his own ; looking on all with pleasure, in whom he saw the image of his divine Master, however they differed from him in lesser matters, and wishing the noblest welfare of such as were not of his mind, even in those things which he apprehended essential to christianity ; he was open and resolute in his avowal of a regard for those sentiments, and that conduct, which he considered as enjoined by him, to whose will the most implicit, unreserved, and chearful obedience, is at all times due. He was, indeed, naturally of a diffident, and rather timorous disposition, yet he was not to be restrained from expressing a firm attachment to the adorable object of his worship,--the only foundation of his hope,--and the unerring rule of his obedience.--- The last particular in his character I shall mention, is --- He was indefatigably diligent in his endeavours to compass the great ends of the Christian Ministry,--- to promote the glory of God,---and to advance the noblest interest of mankind : to this, his own house, the houses of his friends, and especially the house of God, bore constant testimony. Perhaps I should not express myself too strong, if I was to say, that in some degree, (to use a remarkable scriptural expression)

expression) "the zeal of God's house ate him up," exhausted his spirits, impaired his health, and at length put an end to his life; like a brightly burning taper, in giving light to others, he was himself consumed,

On hearing all this, concerning my worthy brother, perhaps, many present feel a desire rising within them to know, in what manner he was removed from our world; in compliance then with the wishes of such, I would just add, that the circumstances of his death, were some of them painful, and some of them pleasing. It was painful to see him, for days before he obtained his dismission, supported in bed, at times insensible, and speechless: but it was pleasing, during those intervals in which he had his senses, and was capable of speaking, to hear him express his chearful resignation to the divine will — his firm trust in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ, the only mediator---the satisfaction with which he left the beloved companion of his life, and his dear children, in the hands of his heavenly Father---and his strong desire to leave this world, and go to a better; and to observe him, when, though sensible, he could not speak, signify

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signify to his enquiring relatives and friends, that he was in possession of tranquillity, submission, and hope, with a manifest air of satisfaction and cheerfulness, on his wan emaciated countenance.

Such was the man, such the minister, whose funeral solemnities we now attend ; the enquiry therefore, with us all, should be,—“ What use is to be made of the instance of mortality, to which our attention is at present called ?” Permit me then, in a few plain words, to endeavour your assistance in the improvement of a providence so particularly affecting ; and while I speak to the ear, may God fix what shall now be delivered, with power on the heart !

Certainly, you, my dear young friends, who are standing at the grave of an indulgent father, must be considered as having a peculiar concern in this painful scene ; and will therefore, I am sure, give me leave to address you, on this mournful occasion. Your loss is very great ; be assured, you have my most tender sympathy,—but amidst all the reason there is for grief, there is cause for thankfulness : Be thankful, Sirs, that “ you sorrow not as those who have no hope.”—The spirit of your honoured father, you
have

have the utmost reason to believe, is now with "the spirits of just men, made perfect" with "an innumerable company of angels," with "Jesus the mediator of the new covenant," and with "God the judge of all,"--and though his body must lie amidst the darkness and dishonours of the grave, it shall not remain there for ever, it shall be raised "in the resurrection of the last day" to life, immortal life. Esteem it your honour and privilege, that you have been favoured with parents who made conscience to instruct, warn, and encourage you,--to set before you a good example,--and to bear you on their hearts at the throne of grace, earnestly entreating, that God himself would abundantly bless you. Consider it also as a mercy, that so good a father was continued with you, till you had risen so far into life,--and that even now it has pleased God to remove him, you are not left orphans, but have the pleasure of reflecting, that a prudent and affectionate mother, not to add, other worthy and valuable relations, yet live, and live near you.--And now, do you ask "what particulars of duty I would further recommend to you in your present situation?" I answer, persevere in the discharge of every instance of filial affection: Great is the pleasure with

with which I take this opportunity to mention the peculiar satisfaction wherewith your late father expressed to me, the sense he had of the engaging manner in which his children behaved towards their parents,—go on in the same path; your mother now especially, needs every expression of the tenderest regard, she can at any time receive from you: Would you fulfil the desire of your deceased parent, and assuage the sorrows of his mourning widow? Stand, O! stand at the utmost distance from those many snares and temptations, which almost every where abound in this thoughtless and dissipated, this dissolute and licentious age. In a word, be followers of him, who was most affectionately concerned for your welfare, especially for your spiritual and eternal welfare, as far as he was a follower of Christ; that so, though you shall “see his face no more” in this world, you may appear with him, at the right hand of the Judge, in the great day, and dwell together in the kingdom of heaven, for ever.

My Rev. fathers and brethren in the christian ministry, now before me, I am persuaded, will indulge me, in suggesting a thought or two to them, on the present solemnity. God has been
pleased

pleased to take our valuable brother from among us, and we have at this time, seen his body committed to the ground;---surely, therefore, it should be our serious enquiry, "What does this providence teach us?" Some of our number were nearly of the same standing in life, and in the ministry, with him,---were at the same seminaries of learning,---and have grown up in the world together, ---certainly then we should consider his removal, as with a peculiar energy addressing us; especially may we view his death in this light, if we add that the youngest of us has been taken away first.--But, though the event I speak of, addresses us in a tone peculiarly striking, must it not be acknowledged, that it directs a variety of important intimations to us all? I shall therefore, just glance at two or three of the principal among them.--Are we not now, my fathers and brethren, reminded of the divine condescension, that to such feeble mortals, as the strongest of us certainly are, "is this grace given, that we should preach among the Gentiles, the unfearchable riches of Christ?"--Have we not, at the mouth of this grave, a loud call to the most immoveable fidelity, lively zeal, and indefatigable diligence, in discharging every part of that im-

portant work,---which certainly must, and soon may, come to a period: a period, permit me to add, which will assuredly be followed by our being called to give, and that by our divine master himself, a minute account of the manner in which the sacred trust, committed to us, has been attended to. God grant, that account may be given by us all "with joy, and not with grief!"--And are we not here taught, that all the success of our labours, for the glory of God, and the advantage of man, must be expected from, and ascribed to God himself; constantly remembering, that "we have the treasure" of the gospel "in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

But does the mournful event, which has brought us hither, suggest these things to us who are engaged in the same public work, in which the deceased was employed?--It as plainly speaks aloud to you, my christian friends, who were lately under his pastoral care. You should be thankful that he was settled among you, and that his labours were so eminently successful, as that while too many churches of Christ are sinking, and languishing, you have
for

for a course of years, been rising and flourishing; so that you are, at this time, one of the largest christian societies in and about this great city: Review what has been the effect of the ministry you have enjoyed, on your hearts and lives; if you have reason to fear, that the divine life has been declining, be humbled; and, if you have ground to hope, that it has been advancing, give the glory to that sovereign and almighty grace to which alone the glory is due: Think seriously and frequently, whether some evil has not been found among you, which has provoked God to take away that great blessing, the removal of which you are now lamenting, and should any thing of this kind come under your notice, be earnest at the divine footstool for forgiveness, and especially, be concerned, that every "root of bitterness" may be removed from you; by this hint, assure yourselves, I mean not to accuse or condemn you, but, as my much-respected friends, to warn you: Guard, continually guard, against every thing which has a tendency to divide and disperse you. I know your late pastor was much concerned that, should God remove him, a cordial affection, and uninterrupted harmony, might prevail among you: It rejoiced his heart to hear that your meet-

ings, for prayer, were, during his being laid aside from his public work, well attended, as it had given him great pleasure to observe the regard paid to them, while he was able to minister to you; "let brotherly love" I beseech you, "continue," and that your union may be preserved, and strengthened, "let nothing," I pray you, "be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves; look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others; let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus:" that is, watch against a selfish, proud, contentious spirit and deportment, but cultivate a benevolent, humble, peaceable, disposition and conduct: Continually direct your eyes to the glorious and gracious head of the church, for every blessing needed by you; rejoicing, that though inferior shepherds die, he the great and good shepherd still lives, "holding the stars in his right hand, and walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks," or, (as that expressive representation leads us to consider him) directing the motions of all his ministers, and interesting himself in the concerns of all his churches; and may he, in due time, introduce, and settle a pastor among you, who shall be a real, eminent and

lasting

lasting blessing, that, all who wish well to the cause of Christ, may behold with joy, your steady perseverance in the faith, and in the order of the gospel ! “ Remember him who had the rule over you, who has spoken unto you the word of God, so as to follow his faith, considering the end of his conversation.”

Without doubt, many of his large congregation, his stated hearers, are now come to express their regard for their late minister, and various are the ways in which it is the duty of them to improve his removal. Have any of you remained unmoved, while in the discharge of his ministry, the thunders of the law rolled over you, or the charms of the gospel were displayed before you ? Let me entreat you to reflect on what you have heard from his lips, and though those lips shall never more proclaim terrors or mercies in your hearing, may the reflection, by the blessing of God, excite in you a deep and lasting conviction, both of the truth and importance of those vast eternal realities, the existence and weight of which, you have hitherto, if not despised, certainly neglected ! Have any of you been brought, by this means, to some just views of your guilt, pollution, and misery, as sinners ? Be thankful that your deceased minister

minister was not removed, 'till he became the happy instrument of awakening and fixing this conviction. Be on your guard against every thing which has a tendency to lessen and extinguish it; and be not satisfied, till you have reason to conclude, that you have been brought to rest on that only foundation, which is revealed in the gospel, constantly remembering, that "other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." And are there any of you, in this large assembly? I doubt not there are many,—to whose conversion the grace of God has made him successful; while you cannot but honour the instrument, let your warmest gratitude be directed to that infinitely excellent and adorable Being, who certainly was the sole agent, in that great, that necessary change, which has been experienced by you: Make a public profession of your faith and love, in that way which the great Lord of the church has wisely and graciously appointed: Be solicitous, that in the steady and diligent use of all instituted means, you may "grow in grace," become established, improving, eminent christians: especially, be concerned so to behave in every situation, as that it may be manifest a real change has been wrought in your hearts, by its beautiful and beneficial effects, throughout your lives;

lives; thus will you more effectually honour your deceased minister, and him who blessed his ministry to you, than by the most frequent, warm, and nervous expressions of regard for them.

But to draw towards a close—Many are the ways in which his death should be improved by all who now surround his grave, whatever be their standing or circumstances in life. Here our thoughts are naturally led back to SIN, the accursed parent of death; “the body is dead,” under the sentence of death, and falls by the execution of that sentence, “because of sin:” Hence we may learn to value the word of God, which sets before us not merely the origin and consequences of death, but also the only way in which any of our apostate race can meet “the last enemy,” with safety and comfort: From this grave, we may collect the certainty of death, with the uncertainty of the time and way of its arrival; we see the ministers of the word of life themselves die, and that even these are sometimes removed, when various circumstances unite to give hope, that he “in whose hands our times are,” would be pleased to continue their lives and labours: Especially should this affecting scene teach us the importance, the necessity

necessity of a preparation for death. This great change will, undoubtedly, pass upon us all, what therefore is the language of this striking solemnity to us? "Be ye also ready."—Jesus Christ is the only Saviour for sinful men; without faith in him, without such knowledge of what the word of God reveals concerning him, as is attended with some degree of assent, approbation and trust, there can be no salvation from him; and this faith ever will produce obedience; let us all, then seriously enquire, whether this evangelical obedience, which will, in some measure, exist, wherever there is a true preparation for death, be found with us? Perhaps there are some here whose consciences faithfully assure them, that this obedience is not found with them, and that therefore, they have grounds for the awful conclusion, that they are not prepared for this change; to you I must say, I most sincerely pity you; your situation is, at present, dangerous, but should you die as you are, your condition will be miserable beyond the power of the most expressive language fully to describe, beyond the capacity of the most extensive thought perfectly to comprehend; without delay,

delay, beg of God, that his sovereign and
 victorious grace may make an happy alteration
 in you. But I am persuaded, that in the
 great multitude here assembled, there are very
 many who are living in the daily practice of that
 obedience which I have just mentioned, and
 have thence scriptural reason to conclude, that
 in some degree, they are prepared for death—
 If so, with pleasure I congratulate you, on your
 dignity and felicity; you are honourable and
 happy now, but you will be inexpressibly more
 honourable and happy hereafter: you will be so
 immediately on death, you will be so at the
 glorious morning of the general resurrection,
 when as surely as the word of God is true,
 “shall be brought to pass, the saying that is
 written, death is swallowed up in victory.” In
 the view of that delightful period, express
 your joy in that triumphant language of the
 holy Apostle, “O death, where is thy sting?
 O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of
 death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law,
 but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory,
 through our Lord Jesus Christ;” and especially
 “my beloved brethren,” endeavour to manifest,
 that the joy you express leads to holiness, by
 being “steadfast, immoveable, always abounding

in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

To conclude, may the afflictive event which has brought us together in this place, and the hints which have been given, with a view to its being suitably improved by us, be so blessed, as that all present may be rendered more useful in life,—become more prepared for the yet untried solemnities of death,—and made meet for that heavenly inheritance, where God of his infinite mercy grant, through Jesus Christ, we may all meet, rejoice, and reign together, for ever! Amen, and Amen!



F I N I S.

SOME ELEGIAC LINES

ON THE LATE

Rev. Mr. EDWARD HITCHIN, B. D.

THE deep-felt news by weeping friends is spread,
The saint is gone, the pious HITCHIN's dead;
From this probationary world remov'd,
By all lamented, as by all belov'd."

Say ye, who heard him take his last farewell,
The mourning kindred, for ye best can tell,
With what serenity his end he view'd;
And fear of death at length by faith subdu'd.

Thrice happy man! thy painful warfare's o'er,
And thou safe landed on that heav'nly shore,
To which blest haven of eternal day
To lift'ning thousands thou hast taught the way;
Thy God, whose name thou didst exalt on earth,
Has call'd thee home, for He best knew thy worth:
Glorious hour! O welcome glad release

From pain and sorrow into realms of peace;
How great must now Thy servant's glory be
To dwell for ever, LORD of LORDS, with Thee!

Hence

On the late Rev. Mr. HITCHIN.

Hence then, ye weeping friends, your grief refrain,
The loss you mourn to him is endless gain ;
HITCHIN is dead, but give your sorrows o'er,
HITCHIN still lives above to die no more.

Ye pious souls, who did in crouds attend
The preaching of our blest departed friend,
His precepts follow, whom you now bemoan,
And by your practice make his bliss your own ;
Live his example, his advice pursue,
And death, his gain, shall be *that* gain to you*.

*Surviving mortals, mark it well,
As none their time of death can tell ;
To this great truth let all attend,
Each moment nearer brings our end :
The grave does each returning day
Some friend demand, as lawful prey,
While ev'ry knell, which sounds their fall,
Speaks death to You, to ME, to ALL.*

* Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.
PSAL. xxxvii. 37.

In the Press, and speedily will be published,

(*Humbly DEDICATED to the CHURCH of CHRIST,
meeting in WHITE-ROW, SPITAL-FIELDS; late
under the PASTORAL CHARGE of the Rev.
EDWARD HITCHIN, B. D.*)

T H E
CHURCH-MEMBER'S
PRACTICAL DIRECTORY,
O R,
EVERY CHRISTIAN'S COMPANION.

Designed for the Use of such, as have engaged in a solemn
Connexion with CHRIST'S VISIBLE CHURCH:

W H E R E I N

The DUTIES of that HIGH RELATION are considered,
both in a MORAL and RELIGIOUS Point of View.

*Let every one, that nameth the Name of Christ, depart from ini-
quity. 2 Tim. chap. ii. v. 19.*

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

An ADDRESS to those, who intend entering upon that
IMPORTANT CHARACTER.

*For which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first
and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?*

*Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to
finish it, all that behold it, begin to mock him.*

Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

Luke, chap. xiv. ver. 28, 29, 30.

BY ARCHIBALD BELL,

AUTHOR of the MEMOIRS of MISS WILLIAMS, &c. 2 vols.

Printed for E. JOHNSON, Aye-maria Lane, and the AUTHOR,
No. 8. Aldgate Street.

It is the duty of every Christian to be prepared to give an account of his faith and conscience to God and to men. (Hebrews 13:17) Dedicated to the Children of Christ, written by William Henry Channing, D.D., Pastor of the First Church of the City of New York.

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CHURCH-MEMBER'S PRACTICAL DIRECTORY

O F

EVERY CHRISTIAN'S COMPANION.
This little book is intended for the use of those who are engaged in the Christian life, and who desire to know more of the duties of a Church-member.

W H E N



The British Museum is a place where the world's most valuable books and manuscripts are preserved. It is a place where the history of the world is written in the pages of its books. It is a place where the mind is fed and the soul is comforted.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

An Appendix to the Directory, containing a list of the names of the members of the Church, and a list of the names of the officers of the Church. This Appendix is intended to be used by the members of the Church, and by the officers of the Church, in order to know the names of the members of the Church, and the names of the officers of the Church.

BY ROBERT BELL

Author of the "Practical Directory," and of the "Church-Member's Companion."

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